

Decatur County Council- 2015 Budgets

Tuesday August 19, 2014 Room 109

Present: Larry Meyer, Geneva Hunt, Bill Metz, Kenny Owens, Danny Peters, Kenny Hooten & Ernie Gauck

Council members noted the health insurance claims are much more than those in 2013 as they reviewed the report prepared by Frank Cummings on the proposed 2015 budgets.

Mr Meyer stated the Clerk of the Courts and the Auditor salaries are low when compared to those offices' salaries state-wide. He continued saying it is extremely important to get good people to run when our people are underpaid. Mr Gauck asked do the salaries need to be the same for all department heads even though the amount of responsibilities widely varies. He asked council to write down what raises they think elected officials and their deputies /full-time employees should receive. After some discussion, council decided to give elected officials a \$900 raise and the deputies/full-time \$600, which would be a \$.33 an hour raise. The part-time salary was increased \$.50 an hour after Mr Gauck stated a \$.25 an hour raise is almost an insult.

Parks Director Bob Barker stated his Parks Board gave him permission to send the letter to Council members concerning the 'salary bonuses' paid to only one office in 2011. Teresa Kovacich, speaking on behalf of all of the Park's employees, asked what did those employees do to get those bonuses? Mr Gauck explained the 'bonuses' were an overpayment that never should have been paid- it was only one occurrence. Council members opted for 'least cost bookkeeping path' versus the cost to calculate the pay back/repayment of those bonuses. Mr Barker also asked Council about the Sheriff's longevity pay. Mr Gauck and Mrs Hunt both stated that is through the Sheriff's Association and maybe the Merit Board. Mr. Barker stated the pay raises used to be based on percentages, not the current 'across the board' pay. He wanted Council members to know he came to them to defend his department and employees.

Mr Barker asked for input on what should be done about the wooden walk bridge connecting the park area to the 'island'. Ron May of **Aecon Engineering** had closed the bridge approximately four years ago; now Mr Barker needs funds to repair it to re-open or remove the concrete pillars. He would like to replace the wooden structure with a pre-engineered walk way. Mr Gauck asked Mr Barker to get some quotes for a new walk way and bring those to a Council meeting.

Council members discussed the amount paid to Purdue for the Extension agents/educators. Members agreed there has been only one agent in Decatur County for 2013 and 2014.

Since the Commissioners did not request a pay raise for themselves nor Council members, Mrs Hunt moved to give the Commissioners and Council members the same \$900 raise given to elected officials. Mr Peters seconded the motion. Mrs Hunt, Mr Peters, Mr Metz, Mr Meyer, Mr Owens voted yes. Mr Hooten voted no. Motion carried.

Sheriff Greg Allen explained his request for two additional officers for Courthouse Security. Mr Gauck asked if he could maybe add only one new officer - Mr Allen agreed.

Judge Tim Day explained to the Council Probation User Fees (PUF) cannot be used for salaries which is why the full salaries for the Court Reporters and Assistant Court Reporters are in both Courts' budget requests. Council members agreed to set a new salary base for any future Court Reporters hired. Both judges have agreed to use monies from the Community Corrections' budget to offset insurance premiums for the three Community Corrections employees in the Non Reverting Health Fund.

Council's next meeting will be on September 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Immediately following the meeting, the Public Hearing for the 2015 Budgets will be held.

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Ernest Gauck, President

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Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_